

Selectmen's Board Meeting Minutes
October 27, 2011

Call to Order: 6:30 PM

Present: David Abbott, Jonathan Villeneuve, David Reingardt

Approve consent Calendar:

A. Approved Selectmen Minutes of September 13, 2011

B. Warrant # 40

1) Selectmen voted to accept the General assistance ordinance maximums for the 2011-2012 year.

2) Selectmen discussed truck rental for road work projects. Road Commissioner Trask has been charging the town \$25 per hour for the use of his truck for the past few years. Selectmen Villeneuve checked around for different rental rates and determined that Uhaul and Larry Stewart auto sales would give a reduced amount for truck rental based on how day, week or month. Selectmen Villeneuve stated he did not have a problem with the \$25 per hour for small hourly work, but takes issue if the work is long term and thinks that the rates should be more in line with market rate. The research Selectman Villeneuve did shows in the long term Quality Services is charging 60% to 80% more than other truck rental operations. Road Commissioner Trask referenced a phone call from Selectman Villeneuve earlier in the week and asked if Villeneuve was acting on behalf of the Board of Selectmen or as a citizen. Selectman Villeneuve said he was acting as a citizen when he called Trask, but that it wouldn't matter because he was well within bounds to call Trask as either Road Commissioner or owner of Quality Services whether he was calling as a citizen of Alna or as a Selectman of Alna. RC Trask stated that he would not change the hourly price in the future and that if Selectmen had a problem with that they could find someone else to rent a truck for cheaper. Selectman Reingardt took that view that the job ended up being over the bid limit per the bidding policy and that RC Trask decided to move forward with the work regardless of that fact. Selectman Reingardt also pointed out that it was this antagonistic attitude that had created problems in the past with how people viewed the situation and why the bidding policy was enacted. Reingardt also mentioned that while RC Trask giving business to his own company Quality Services wasn't illegal it was viewed as a conflict of interest and "tweaked" taxpayers in town. All 3 Selectmen agreed that as Road Commissioner, Trask should be looking for the best deal for the town and saving money to complete more road projects whether or not that money is going to his own company and that the current tactic for truck rental is a creative use of avoiding the bidding policy. Selectmen agreed that in the future there should be an idea of how long and the cost of the project before the work is done and if a project is underway and looks like it is going to go over the no bid amount that they should be notified. Selectman Villeneuve said in the future he will not sign warrants for truck rental expenditures unless they are more in line with the market rates. Selectmen also discussed the culvert replacement and ditching needed to be done on Lothrop road and asked RC Trask how much it would cost. RC Trask said that he didn't know and that the Selectmen would have to get a quote. RC Trask said the ditching would be put off until next year. Selectman Villeneuve pointed out that picking up the phone seems like an easy thing to do. Townsperson & Alna Road Crew worker Chris Cooper said that Selectman Villeneuve was the one who was pushing for shoulder work to be done this year to preserve the new paving work done on the town roads and that it was the Selectmen's job to intervene when it looked like a larger job was imminent. Selectman Villeneuve stated that they were not slow to notice, because they had been

accused of micromanaging RC Trask in past and restated that the RC should be looking out for the best interest of the town and trying to stretch his budget to get the most work done. Selectman Villeneuve also pointed out that RC Trask should have checked into a lower truck rental cost if he had an idea of how long the work was going to go on. Selectman Villeneuve defended his position to have the right to call a vendor that is contracted to do work for the Town. Townsperson Lynnette Flaccus asked Selectmen if the RC was required to have a road plan and associated costs at the beginning of the year and Selectmen said that the RC presents a proposed budget every year before the annual March Town Meeting. Selectmen decided to discuss truck rental at the next meeting.

3) Treasurer Honora Jordan submitted a memo to Selectmen with her view on using a payroll service. She told Selectmen that there wasn't enough payroll to justify the use of a payroll company. The town's accountant, William Brewer also sent a letter backing up Treasurer Jordan's position.

4) Taxpayer Kevin Woods was present to ask Selectmen to clarify the assessing process used in town. Selectmen said they would contact the Town's contracted assessing agent John O'Donnell to clarify some of the assessing issues.

Adjourn: 8pm

Respectfully Submitted

Amy Warner Town Clerk

David Abbott

Jonathan Villeneuve

David Reingardt